



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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GOVERNOR

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WORLD AIDS DAY IN HAWAII

HONOLULU — On Thursday, December 1st, Hawaii will join communities throughout the world in a unified observance of World AIDS Day. Annually, World AIDS Day serves to strengthen global efforts to address the challenges of the AIDS pandemic, which continues to spread throughout the world. Since 1988, December 1st has been a day of compassion, hope, solidarity and understanding about AIDS. World AIDS Day provides an opportunity to open channels of communication, strengthen the exchange of information and experience, and forge a spirit of social tolerance.

Nancy Kern, HIV/STD Prevention Coordinator for the Hawaii State Department of Health, states that, "World AIDS Day is the only international day of coordinated action to address the HIV epidemic. It is an opportunity for residents of Hawaii to learn how the epidemic affects not only people living in countries abroad hardest hit by this disease, but also how our friends, neighbors and co-workers right here in Hawaii are impacted."

Governor Lingle and Lt. Governor Aiona have declared December 1st as World AIDS Day in Hawaii by proclamation earlier this month. The theme for 2005 World AIDS Day in Hawaii is "No Shame." The negative stigma attached to HIV/AIDS has created barriers in fighting the disease. People are therefore less likely to get tested and seek treatment if they are HIV positive. This situation contributes to the continuing spread of the epidemic, and World AIDS Day provides an opportunity to bring an awareness of these issues to the people of Hawaii.

In Hawaii, as in many parts of the world, HIV remains a highly stigmatized condition. Twenty-three years have passed since HIV was identified, and HIV-related discrimination and prejudice continue in Hawaii and around the world.

The following are current data that reflect the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Hawaii:

- It is estimated that there are 2,300 to 3,200 individuals in Hawaii who are HIV positive.
- Since 1983, there have been 2,808 reported cases of AIDS in Hawaii (to June 30, 2005).

(more)

- A total of 137 new AIDS cases were reported during this last year (July 2004 to June 2005). Of these AIDS cases, 91 percent were among males.
- Twenty-seven percent of AIDS cases reported to June 30th, 2005 were among Asians and Pacific Islanders.
- Hawaii has a relatively low rate of reported AIDS cases among injection drug users (seven percent). This is due in part to our statewide needle exchange program, which has been in operation since 1990.

In the United States:

- Approximately 40,000 new infections occur in the U.S. each year.
- An estimated 1 million people are living with HIV/AIDS in the U.S.; an estimated 250,000 of these individuals are unaware that they are infected.
- Seventy percent of new infections occur among men, although women are significantly affected.
- There are more people living with AIDS in the U.S. than ever before. At the end of 2003, an estimated 385,000 people were living with AIDS, currently the fifth leading cause of death among people 25-44 in the U.S. These data reflect an increasing need for continued HIV prevention services, as well as treatment and care.

Internationally:

- 42 million people are estimated to be living with HIV/AIDS around the world.
- An estimated 5 million people acquired HIV in 2002, including 2 million women and 800,000 children under the age of 15.
- During 2002, AIDS caused the deaths of an estimated 3.1 million people, including 1.2 million women and 610,000 children under the age of 15.
- Women are becoming increasingly affected by HIV. Approximately 50%, or 19.2 million of the 38.6 million adults living with HIV or AIDS worldwide, are women.

In acknowledgment of World AIDS Day, in memory of those who have passed away, in recognition of those living with HIV/AIDS, and in appreciation for the dedicated health care professionals working with those affected by HIV/AIDS, a calendar of Hawaii World AIDS Day events follows. Those interested in participating in World AIDS Day are welcome to attend these events or to contact the STD/AIDS Prevention Branch - Department of Health at (808) 733-9281 for further information.

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For more information, contact:
Nancy Kern
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Email: nkern@hgea.org

NEIGHBOR ISLAND WORLD AIDS DAY EVENTS

Big Island

- December 1st: Hawai'i Island HIV/AIDS Foundation (HIHAF) will join with UH Hilo students to set up displays and demonstrations. HIV/AIDS counseling and testing will also be provided.
- December 1st: HIHAF will also host a memorial celebration in Hilo at the Liliuokalani Garden Park, Japanese Tea House from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm. Similar events will held at Hulihe'e Palace in Kona.

Kauai

- November 21st to 25th, the AIDS Quilt will be displayed at Kaua'i Veterans Memorial Hospital.
- November 27th, the Quilt will be displayed at the Church of the Pacific on the north shore. Handouts will be available about the Quilt, World AIDS Day and the Winter Ball. The sermon on HIV/AIDS will be delivered.
- December 3rd, the quilt will be displayed at Gaylord's.
- December 5th, the quilt will go to the Learning Resources Center/Library at Kauai Community College until December 9th.
- There will be World AIDS Day tables around the island on the North Shore, the West Side, as well information at Malama Pono and the Department of Health. HIV testing will be available at the two latter sites.
- There will be radio and television spots leading to World AIDS Day.

Maui

- Please see the following website: www.worldaidsday.hawaii.org

Information on other Neighbor Island World AIDS Day activities is available by calling:

- **Maui: Maui AIDS Foundation at (808) 242-4900.**
- **Big Island: Hawaii Island HIV/AIDS Foundation**
 - **West Hawaii: (808) 331-8177.**
 - **East Hawaii: (808) 981-2428.**
- **Kauai: Malama Pono, the HIV/AIDS service agency on Kauai, at (808) 246-9577.**

OAHU WORLD AIDS DAY EVENTS – DECEMBER 1ST

- There will be a community observation of World AIDS Day on Thursday, December 1st on Oahu. Local health and HIV/AIDS organizations will be setting up tables outside Bank of Hawaii on Bishop Street and on Fort Street Mall starting at 11:00 am on World AIDS Day. Staff of these agencies will distribute HIV/AIDS information, including information on HIV prevention and care services.
- At 5:30 pm, a service will be held at the Cathedral of our Lady of Peace at 1184 Bishop Street to recognize World AIDS Day. There will be a candlelight vigil at this service, as well as recognition of the meaning of World AIDS Day by speakers, and the presentation of the Second Annual Suzanne Richmond-Crum Award for exemplary services provided by an individual in the area of HIV/AIDS.
- AIDS Memorial Quilt panels will be displayed for public viewing in the Cathedral of Our Lady of Peace from 2:00 pm until the end of the 5:30 pm ceremony.
- The public schools on Oahu are participating in a Poster Contest supporting the two themes of World AIDS Day, "No Shame" (the local focus) and "Stop AIDS - Keep the Promise" (the National theme). The winners of the Poster Contest will have their work displayed in the Gallery of [The Cathedral of Our Lady of Peace](#) from 10:00 am - 5:30 pm on December 1st.
- From 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm, there will be a showing of the Emmy-award winning PBS television documentary, "Simple Courage." This film will be shown at the club [Next Door](#) (43 N. Hotel Street). This business has generously donated their space in support of World AIDS Day. "Simple Courage" depicts the similarities between the management of Hansen's Disease (leprosy) epidemic in the late 19th century, and the current AIDS situation in our state. After the 60 minute documentary Stephanie Castillo, writer/director/producer, will be available to answer questions. Everyone in the community concerned about AIDS is urged to attend this event to view "Simple Courage."

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Hawaii's 2005 World AIDS Day Website:

www.worldaidsdayhawaii.org

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For more information, on World AIDS Day, please call Nancy Kern at the STD/AIDS Prevention Branch of the Hawaii Department of Health at (808) 733-9281.